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Navy & Marine Corps Medical News  
MEDNEWS #97-24  
June 13, 1997

This service distributes news and information to  
Sailors and Marines, their families, civilian employees,  
and retired Navy and Marine Corps families. Further  
dissemination of this e-mail is encouraged.

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MN970218. Weight Management Program Promotes Lifestyle  
Changes

Jacksonville, FL - Having problems maintaining Navy  
weight standards? Failed the Physical Readiness Test (PRT)?  
A pilot Navy Weight Management Program at Naval Air Station  
(NAS) Jacksonville, FL, where the motto "It's a Lifestyle  
Change," is helping Sailors deal with these issues.

The current program has undergone several major  
changes. Originally four weeks long and available on an in-  
patient basis, the present two-week course averages about 20  
students each. It is specifically designed for Navy E-5s  
and above who have twice-failed either Navy body fat or  
weight standards or the PRT.

The principal focus of the weight management course is  
to offer education on nutrition and fitness. The latest  
research from schools and the health industry is used in the  
program.

"We like to think of ourselves more as weight  
management educators," said Bob Martin, a health promotions  
specialist at NAS Jacksonville.

Martin teaches students to be leery of quick weight loss gimmicks.

"We believe that you don't need to buy a book or enroll in a special program in order to lose weight," Martin said. "We teach students here to use food logs, read food product labels and look for low-fat or fat-free items at restaurants."

Although most of the weight management program is taught in the classroom, some time is spent in other locales.

"We visit the aerobics center, spend time showing students the right weight machines to use, learning water aerobics in the pool and time on the fitness trail," said BMC Eric Kyvik, USCG, a health promotions specialist with the program. "I like to think that we give students all the right tools to lose weight. Then, it's up to them to use those tools and apply that knowledge to change their lifestyles."

By JO1 Randall C. Melton, NAS Brunswick ME

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#### MN970219. Support Teams Help New Families

Portsmouth, VA - If you're a soon-to-be or new parent in the Norfolk, VA area, Naval Medical Center (NMC) Portsmouth can help you learn the ups and downs of that most important responsibility.

NMC Portsmouth has a New Family Support Team (NFST), consisting of a team leader, family assessment workers, and family support workers. The team offers education on pregnancy, birth and parenting as well as parenting support groups.

The type of support the family needs is assessed by a questionnaire administered to the family by a member of the support team.

"That questionnaire determines if they need any or all of the services provided under the program," said Bettye Crocker, a family assessment worker on the NFST. "Even if services, such as home visits, are not required, the new parents are still permitted to use resources provided through the support team."

One of the most important services the team provides is a home visit by a support worker for moms-to-be in their third trimester or soon after the baby's birth.

"The program is great. We didn't have any family close by, and parenting was very new to me," said Sonya Andrews, the wife of DCFN David Andrews, a sailor aboard USS ANZIO (CG 68). "They sent Brenda (a support worker), and she has helped us tremendously."

According to Crocker, the family support program isn't just to help moms care for their newborns, but to help strengthen the family unit and teach good parenting skills.

Families may remain in the program until the child reaches age 5 and begins school.

Thanks to the NFST, new parents can sleep much easier -

at least until midnight feeding.  
By JO2 Cynthia A. Sykes, Naval Base Norfolk  
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MN970220. Evening, Saturday Hours Available at Bremerton  
Bremerton, WA - The family practice, immunization and pediatric clinics at Naval Hospital Bremerton now have extended hours on Mondays and Saturdays.

The clinics are open Monday evening from 5:30 to 8:30 p.m. and Saturday from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m.

"The extended-hours clinic is designed for our TRICARE Prime patients who are enrolled in family practice or pediatrics whose work schedules conflict with normal clinic hours," said CDR Soren Christensen, NC, department head for ambulatory care nursing. "It provides an opportunity for them to receive necessary medical care that does not take them away from their workplace or demanding family obligations."

According to Christensen, the clinic will provide routine health care, sports physicals and acute care services. An example of acute care is something that is not life threatening, but requires prompt attention, such as an earache.

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MN970221. Naples Brushes Up On Emergency Skills

Naples, Italy - Among the personnel assigned to U.S. Naval Hospital (USNH) Naples are two surgical response teams trained to deploy as mobile surgical response units providing lifesaving surgical treatment to casualties of combat or disaster. These teams put their skills to the test during an overnight exercise held recently.

"The exercise simulated a terrorist attack in our area of responsibility," said LCDR Richard Beaudoin, MSC, USNH Naples' contingency officer.

The exercise started with a telephone recall of all personnel from the teams. Equipment was inspected, dog tags issued, and camp was set up the next morning.

Each team consisted of 16 people: a general surgeon, orthopedic surgeon, anesthesiologist, general medical officer, operating room nurse, ward nurse, and corpsmen.

The response teams installed a mobile operating room and pre- and post-operation areas. Additionally, the hospital's mess specialists provided meals to the teams.

The American Red Cross, Naval Support Activity Naples Disaster Preparedness, and a handful of key volunteers were also involved in the exercise. The volunteers were the "wounded," wearing special make-up to simulate injuries. They were carried by stretchers into the triage area, where they were sorted out according to the severity of their injuries.

"The training was a perfect way for the doctors, nurses and corpsmen to keep their skills sharp," said LCDR Tom Davis, MC, one of the surgical response team leaders. "With

the constant turnover of our personnel, this is the best way to train new people."

Well-trained people are not the only element of readiness. The equipment they used must also be ready for a medical emergency. The same equipment used in the exercise is stored on pallets at Capodichino, ready to be loaded onto a plane.

"One of the surgical response teams can be on their way to the designated spot - anywhere in Southern Europe, Africa or the Middle East - in a matter of a couple of hours," Beaudoin said.

By Chris Ingalls, Naval Europe News Service

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#### MN970222. Surgeon General's Leaders Conference Scheduled

Mark your calendar! The Surgeon General's Leaders Conference (SGLC) will be held Aug. 25-29 at the Crystal Gateway Marriott Hotel, Arlington, VA.

This dynamic and challenging week will provide insight and guidance on Navy Medicine. This year's theme is "Readiness Realities - Beyond the Bridge to the 21st Century."

Commands are authorized a specified number of attendees because of limited budget and travel funds. Refer to naval message 032122Z JUN 97 for the specified number of invited attendees per command for the conference.

Each of the commands' selected attendees must submit their names no later than June 23 to LCDR Steve Keener, MSC, via e-mail nmc6slk(at sign)bms220.med.navy.mil. Attendees' names must be submitted in order to pre-register for the conference.

SGLC attendees can pre-register beginning June 16, 1997 via the BUMED homepage, support1.med.navy.mil/BUMED. A non-reimbursable conference fee will be assessed.

Additional information can be obtained through the BUMED homepage, e-mail address sglc@sherikon.com or by calling Kim Hessong or Karen Dickman, SHERIKON, at (301) 698-2686.

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#### MN970223. Leaders Conference Solicits Abstracts

In connection with the Surgeon General's Leaders Conference being held Aug. 25-29 in Arlington, VA, displays or demonstrations are being solicited for the Information and Resource Room adjacent to the conference.

The displays or demonstrations should focus on the Surgeon General's four goals or Navy Medicine's strategic goals. A 150-word summary abstract regarding your display or demonstration must be e-mailed or faxed by June 30 to Resource Room Coordinators LCDR M. Celli, NC, fax (703) 681-7129, e-mail mcelli(as sign)ha.osd.mil or LT J. Osborne, MSC, fax (202) 762-3743, e-mail nmc3jwo(at sign)bms200.med.navy.mil.

More information and abstract forms are available after

June 16 on the Bureau of Medicine and Surgery's homepage at [support1.med.navy.mil/bumed](http://support1.med.navy.mil/bumed).

For more immediate information, call Celli at (703) 681-7129 or Osborne at (202) 762-3143.

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#### MN970224. Fisher Houses: Caring for Families of the Seriously Ill

If compassion was a place, it would be a Fisher House.

The 24 Fisher Houses, located throughout the country on or near military bases, offer military families a haven in times of distress and uncertainty when their loved ones are hospitalized for an extended period of time. Five of these houses are on Navy facilities: two at National Naval Medical Center, Bethesda, MD, and Naval Medical Center, Portsmouth, VA; and one at Naval Medical Center, San Diego.

The primary function of the Fisher Houses is to provide a comfortable, convenient, low-cost place to stay for the families of seriously ill individuals.

"Who among us could afford to stop what we are doing, still have bills, and travel thousands of miles? Most people arrive here not knowing where they are going to stay," said Karen Stansbury, director of the Fisher Houses at National Naval Medical Center in Bethesda, MD.

But it also provides another, less pragmatic service. Traveling hundreds of miles, being uprooted from family, friends, jobs, and the stability of normal life because of a distressing diagnosis can be extremely stressful; Fisher Houses can help provide effective stress relief.

In addition to warm, inviting comfortable surroundings that include a fireplace, common kitchen and living room with large library, residents often hold informal support groups. Frequently, volunteer organizations, such as Wives' Clubs and Boy Scout groups bring in covered dish meals for the families.

"It's a home away from home," said Stansbury.

Each family enjoys the privacy of a room or suite, bath, their own telephone line, and television. There's room for up to eight families. The average length of stay is 12 days.

Last year the Fisher Houses served 5,875 families. The Fisher Houses Foundation estimates that the houses saved families of seriously ill patients almost \$5.4 million in lodging, dining and transportation.

The 24 houses were donated by Philanthropists Zachary and Elizabeth Fisher to aid military and veteran's families faced with a medical crisis.

By Kimberly Allen, Bureau of Medicine and Surgery

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#### MN970225. Yokosuka Corpsmen Take Time For Orphans

Yokosuka, JA - The kids just wanted to have fun, and corpsmen from the Naval Hospital and Dental Clinic in Yokosuka were more than happy to comply.

The kids were orphans from the nearby Kobo Orphanage and the corpsmen were members of the Junior Enlisted Association

(JEA). And the fun was a barbecue, sponsored by the JEA.

"It was one of the best times I've had with fellow JEA members and the children of Kobo," said HM3 Franklin Muhammed. "The most memorable part of this occasion was bringing in the cake. The children were very excited to see a cake that big."

Additional members who participated in the party were HM3 Julie Grant, HN Frederick Jefferson, HN Brian Grant, HN Alonzo Flournoy, HA Stefanie Huntoon, HA Tam Bui, HM3 Maria Rahming, and HN Chris Mixer.

The JEA has been volunteering with the Kobo Orphanage for many months, sponsoring other events such as a pizza and skating party and an ice cream social during which the association donated \$300 worth of toys to the orphanage.

By Bill Doughty, USNH Yokosuka

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#### MN970226. Portsmouth Changes Phone Numbers

Portsmouth, VA - Naval Medical Center (NMC) Portsmouth is changing its telephone numbers.

On June 14 at 12:02 a.m., the old telephone prefix at NMC Portsmouth, 398, will cease to exist. In its place will be a new prefix, 953.

The last four digits of all numbers will remain the same.

The change was required because the serving telephone company had run out of telephone numbers for the 398 prefix. The new 953 prefix will be dedicated for NMC Portsmouth and Portsmouth's Naval School of Health Sciences' use only.

The new general information number for NMC Portsmouth is 953-5000.

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#### MN970227. TRICARE Question and Answer

Question: As a retiree over age 65, am I still eligible for DOD pharmacy benefits?

Answer: Unless you are enrolled in the Uniformed Services Family Health program, you and your qualified family members are eligible for pharmacy services at Military Treatment Facilities (MTF), where you can obtain up to a 90-day supply of medications at a time, if your physician prescribes it. You may have prescriptions filled or refilled at any MTF if the medication is available.

Additional information on TRICARE is available on the Department of Defense (Health Affairs) Homepage on the World-Wide Web at [www.ha.osd.mil](http://www.ha.osd.mil).

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#### MN970228. Healthwatch: Food Pyramid Balances Diet

If you think you're eating a balanced, nutritious diet by choosing foods from each of the four food groups, you're

wrong. In 1992, the United States Food and Drug Administration and the Department of Health and Human Services decided the four food groups were not enough and created the "food pyramid."

In the pyramid, foods we should eat more often are placed at the base, and those we should eat less frequently are at the top.

Cereal, rice and pasta are at the bottom of the pyramid. USDA recommends six to 11 servings of these foods daily. The pyramid's next level recommends two to four serving of fruits and three to five servings of vegetables. The third level includes two to three servings of milk, yogurt and cheese and two to three servings of meat, poultry, fish, dry beans, eggs, and nuts. Fats, oils and sweets are on top of the pyramid and should be eaten sparingly.

What constitutes a serving?

In the bread group, one serving equals one slice of bread, one ounce of ready-to-eat cereal or one-half cup cooked cereal, rice or pasta.

A serving of vegetables is one cup of raw leafy greens, three-quarters cup vegetable juice, or one-half cup of other vegetables chopped.

A serving of fruits is one medium apple, banana or orange; one melon wedge; one-half cup of chopped fruits or berries or three-quarters cup fruit juice.

A serving from the milk group includes a cup of milk or yogurt or 1 1/2 ounces of cheese.

A serving from the meat category equals two to three ounces of cooked, lean meat, poultry or fish; one egg; one-half cup cooked beans or two tablespoons of seed or nuts.

"The majority of your plate should contain rice, pasta, potatoes, bread or other grains, accompanied by fruits and vegetables," said LT Leslie Cox, MSC, dietitian at the Bureau of Naval Personnel. "Does meat cover the majority of your plate? If so, it is time to review the food guide pyramid."

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Feedback and comments are welcome. Story submissions are encouraged. Contact Jan Davis, MEDNEWS editor, at e-mail mednews@bms200.med.navy.mil, telephone 202/762-3223 (DSN 762-3223), or fax 202/762-3224.